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ANNOUNCING THE END OF

RAIL TRAVEL NEWSLETTER

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rail travel newsletter

VOL. 4 NO. 23
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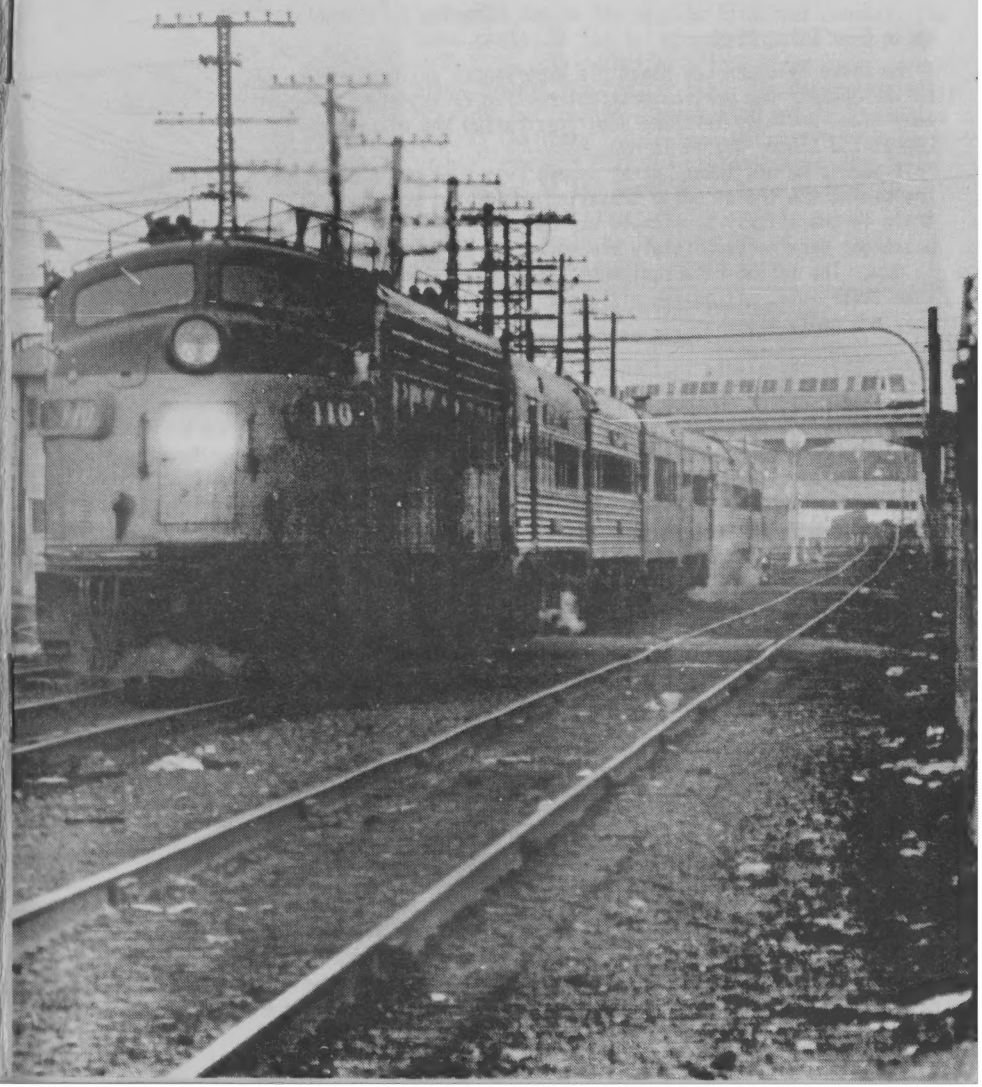
DECEMBER 1974
#97



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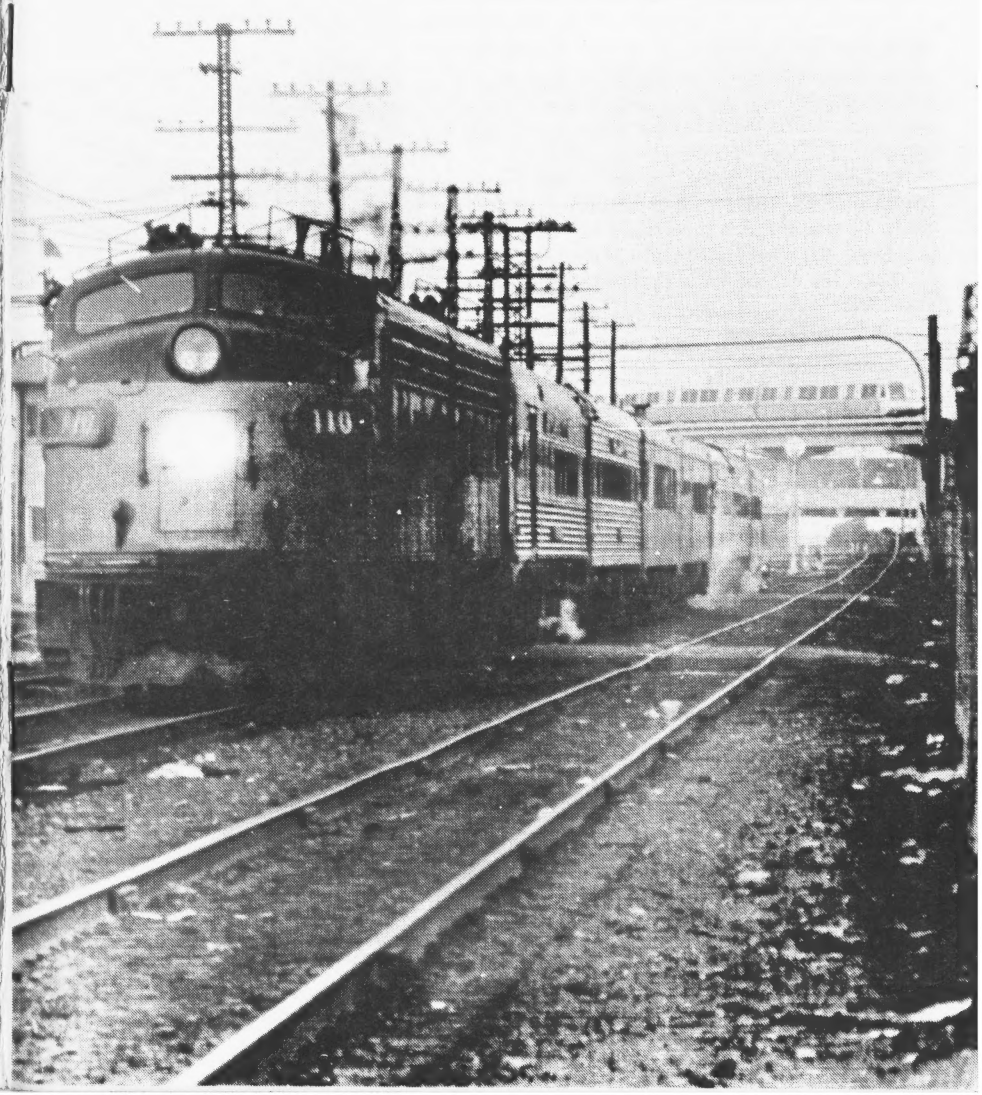

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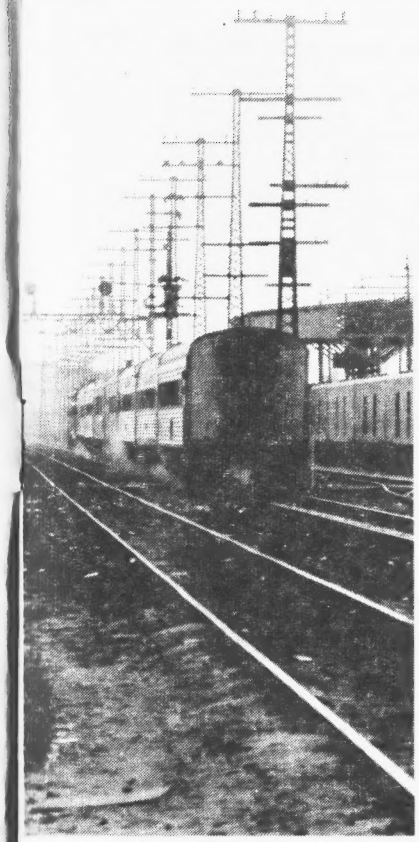

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FUN AND OLD TIMES

with Amtrak in the Northeast

by Peter Putnam Bretz

It was Nov. 28. I stood in the queen of the great railroad halls, Grand Central Station. I gazed up, up into the stratosphere of its towering domed ceiling, with the etchings of constellations winking back at me in lightbulb stars. The terminal is being cleaned now, and there are sections where beautiful muraled halls shine with a brilliance unknown to commuters of the 50's and 60's. The New York Central's "fleet" would depart, too, once upon a time. This morning on track 34 awaits the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS. But it's an Amtrak train, and there is little glory.

I step into a yellow and blue D&H coach #32, the "Bulwagga". The train is well patronized, carrying thru cars to both Montreal and Detroit. Two ex-NH FL-9s supply power as we leave GCT on time. #5010 and #5025 wear thin, showing the old red and white NH logo through the black paint. Behind is NYC baggage car 9120, four 6400-series Amtrak coaches (all ex-NYC); 8341, ex-UP lunch-counter lounge; Amtrak coaches 6428 & 6423; and NYC 3600 (same type of coach, only unrefurbished). These 3600- and 3100-series cars were regulars on Empire Service trains. Next came the D&H 32, and rearmost was MTA 3271 (built for the first Pere Marquette train in 1946).

On board, the trainmen were very attentive and pleasant, helping passengers with luggage, cracking jokes and putting all at ease. Out into the sun from the Park Ave tunnel and along the Electric Division of the Penn Central. I headed for the ex-UP diner and quickly found a seat. I was none too soon, as the tables filled with famished passengers, all wanting breakfast. I ordered scrambled eggs, sausage, English muffin, grapefruit juice and coffee. We grumbled over the Harlem River and past the "new" Yankee Stadium. Next came the place where the Polo Grounds used to be, and apartment houses were now. There had been an old rickety elevated bridge across the river from Sedgwick Avenue, which served as an IRT link to the old ball park. Years before, it had continued downtown as the 6th Ave El. Now, it had just been torn down. Pieces of bridge and track lay strewn about as if some giant kid had tired of his snap-track layout and pulled it apart, leaving the sections in big piles. In a second, we flashed by the old passenger car wash rack where the Central's fleet had been cleaned. It too was torn down. Look fast now, on the other side and try to spot the old Sedgwick Ave terminus of the NYC's Putnam Division. The little 2-car trains from Upper Westchester and Putnam Counties, pulled by 2-6-0 and ten-wheelers would simmer here during the day. Nothing but weeds now. High Bridge Station in a minute now, where the transfer to Hudson Div. trains would take place. I recall the time, in the early 50's, when a Putnam steamer raced our MU'ed train along the parallel track, the driving wheels whirling past my window.

We turned away from the Putnam Division near Marble Hill, passed the 'Duyvil, and sprang out along the majestic Hudson on 4-track main. I munch an English muffin and glance over across to the Palisades, those great rock walls that once contained a relief carving of Adolf Hitler's face. Quite the talk during World War II. The carving is mutilated now, unrecognizable. The river broadens to about 5 miles at Croton Point, and we stop to change engines at Harmon. I watch the FL-9s being exchanged for standard Central E-8s. Why not run the FL-9s up to Albany? Mainly because the old engines might not make too many trips, and besides, they're not too many to cover all the trains.

Off we go again, and I spot the "P2Bs" at Croton north. We speed along the southbound main in order to pass the local "beeliner". Our train keeps close to the river side up past Peekskill and the Bear Mt. Bridge, crossing over at Garrison. Around a long curve now, and I follow the Black diesels' progress. I recall a scene from my boyhood, when I rounded this same curve aboard the PACEMAKER and watched the black Hudson spew forth smoke up ahead. Fast running most of the way to Albany. Checking the Poughkeepsie Bridge (I heard reports that it'd been repaired), I still saw what seemed to be burned out sections. Right at 11:20, the EMPIRE arrived at Albany-Renssalaer station. After switching, the train was transformed: number, name and power all were new. #69, the ADIRONDACK consisted of D&H #1001, an old ex-Erie modernized heavyweight coach with turtleback roofline, the MTA coach and the "Bulwagga" and leased CP dinette-coach "Bluff Point" (CP "507). For power--well,

riding the LAURENTIAN in 1970, I had missed getting the PA's and was hoping for them now. And yes, there was Alco PA #18. Due to mechanical problems, her sister was in the shop and RS-11 #5020 was on the point, the PA supplying steam.

Crossing the river and backing down to the D&H track, why, there was the old Albany station, sitting forlornly next to a freeway. Up a mile or two the dome section brushed along some tell-tales. Now, that was something new. At Colonie Shops, a variety of equipment was kicking around, including an ex-Reading coach in blue and yellow, but the newly painted war bonnet sharknoses were safely tucked away inside. At Saratoga Spring, we sat for 37 minutes for a freight to clear. He had broken a knuckle, putting our meet with #68 just above Ft. Edward. As it passed, also with a dome, I noticed a drumhead sign on its rear. Getting down, I checked our train, and sure enough, a nice train name sign with designs of trees and such proclaimed the ADIRONDACK! We had 2/3 capacity on board with the Erie car closed off.

Snow appeared on the ground by Mechanicsville and stayed with us. After a while, I sat down to eat. The facilities in the rear of the dome car are very limited, with only two regular tables, and some serviettes facing inward with lounge seats. White cloths and Amtrak table service, of course. I enjoyed a very tasty ham and cheese sandwich prepared in the smallish kitchen under the dome. As we clicked along, I reflected on the variations of this train over the years. It played host to domes, observations, elephant-eared 800's, PA's, and green and cream heavyweight coaches, plus D&RGW diners. In all, the D&H has always run a good train. There was a fine attitude in the air today, also. Up in the dome again along Lake Champlain in the gathering dusk. A trainman was saying to a passenger: ". . . yes, this mountain, during the summer, is chock full of rattlesnakes. They hole up this time of year, but when spring comes, watch out." Looking at the snow covered hill, it suddenly became a sinister mountain leering down at our tiny train.

Plattsburg was attained 45 minutes late, but customs at Lacolle was swift. Over the D&H-owned Napierville Jct Railway to the CP at Adirondack Jct. Smoother track here and we zipped up to 80. Due to padding in the timetable, we arrived at Windsor Station on time at 6:50pm. I walked thru the chill night to gare Central of the Canadian National and began a weekend adventure in Quebec Province.

I returned the evening of Dec. 2 to Central Station—THE MONTREALER was posted for track 15. Checking in at the first class desk, I was told that I might have to be bumped out of my space. Altho positive reservations had been made weeks ago, I had a pass for this trip, so low priority--besides, the conductor said I could stay in the headhead sleeper so no problem. But there were to be other problems later.

At loading time, a huge mob descended to the train. I stashed my gear in the deadhead an checked the train, walking along the high-level platform. Three Amtrak covered wagons headed #61 up: 266,295 and 261; then two baggage-dorm-18 seat coaches, 1591 and 1592; sleeper 2105 "Henderson", a 5-1-4-4 ex-Seaboard car, used by Amtrak as a 6DBR, 4 RMT, crew section car; #2699, a 10-6; #8335 diner-tavern; 3302 bar-lounge (Le Pub) rebuilt ex-C&O coache; chair cars 6029 (an Amtrak rebuild, ex-ATK 5218, ex-RF&P 854); 5643 (ex-NYC); 6056 (ex-I&N); 7259 (ex-NH parlor); and 6007 (ex-SAL). The last two were closed off leaving Montreal.

I came back to the deadhead sleeper, spliced between the diner and the other sleepers. #2550 was one of the ex-Rock Island 8-6 that Amtrak purchased for the still-born 2nd New York-Chicago train. And the only RI car to retain its original name: "Air Force Academy". It was refurbished well, and I selected roomette 2, across from the conductor's set-up. The center bedrooms were overly hot, however. Since there was no attendant assigned to a deadhead car, I turned down the heat myself, then noticed the writeup sheet stating just why this car was out of service. "Window broken in roomette 3, heat in bedrooms bad, and....rats in car!!" Don't tell me! A rodent running under the tables in a diner is one thing, but over your face at night in a darkened pullman--not exactly the greatest! Oh, did my imagination start up. But, wait. The heat was getting better after making the adjustment, and the window had been repaired in the roomette (not lexan but glass; ah, those Canadians), so maybe... Thing about rats are that they stay out of sight until the lights go off, then come out. Later, however, a crew member said that they weren't rats at all, just mice. Well?! That's better--I think. A little mouse I can put up with. Thoughts of poor little kids sleeping amid rat-infested tenements went through my mind. They have to put up with it every night.

(continued on page 16)

mixed train of thoughts

ICG'S PAUL REISTRUP still appears to be the top contender for the position of new Amtrak president. One rumor circulating in the Midwest had it that he had already accepted the post, but Amtrak officially said no, he hasn't been offerred the job yet and can't be until and unless Congress raises the $60,000 salary restriction on Amtrak execs. The House has just passed the Surface Transportation Act, and the Senate could tack on a salary increase in its version if it desired. Amtrak's board meets again Dec. 18 and could possibly take up the matter then..... AMTRAK'S AGAIN PLANNING to eliminate the first-class diner on the SOUTHWEST LIMITED. This would happen sometime mid-January and mid-May if president Roger Lewis approves the move ..... A MISSOURI NEWSPAPER reported that an Amtrak official had told the state that an extension of the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR 17 miles into Hannibal, MO was being studied as a top priority item, but Amtrak can officially report nothing on this matter ..... AMTRAK'S NEW BILEVEL cars have gotten 3 bidders thus far: Pullman-Standard, Budd and Rohr, and Amtrak plans to announce the winning bidder in early January. Amtrak asked for price figures on 250, 350 and 450 cars, the exact number to be ordered to depend on the final cost (altho Amtrak's 5-year plan calls for 235 cars). The builder is to deliver completed cars to Amtrak, with the rail corporation providing the builder with carpeting, seats, food service units, sleeping units, etc. All the cars will have air suspension systems, toilet units that neutralize wastes that are then dropped on the tracks, and showers in the men's and women's rooms. The sleepers being ordered will be double-slumbercoach type budget sleepers, without toilets in every room (these will be located at the ends of the halls and downstairs. The builders are figuring 20 months' time for tooling up, so first delivery would be in the latter part of 1976, with 16-18 cars per month being turned out a short time later. A certain ratio of coach, food service, and sleeper cars must be delivered. Besides plans for this new equipment, Amtrak is talking about stripping about 310 sleepers, lounges and diners to shells to rebuild them with head-end electrical power, new trucks, and other improvements. This plan has not reached the final approval stage yet..... THE EMPIRE BUILDER derailed in St. Paul, MN eastbound the morning of Nov. 26. There were no injuries, and damage to equipment was light. Four of the 11 cars derailed but remained upright--these were #2154 "Silver Orchid" (used as dorm), 4512, 5017 "Silver Cinch," and dome coach 9485. Rest of cars resumed the trip after 2-hr delay. Psgrs from derailed cars were bused or flown on. Train was doing 10mph when it derailed on one leg of the wye just east of the old St. Paul Union Depot..... ILLINOIS GOVERNOR WALKER in early December vetoed funds for an Amtrak 403-b service between Chicago and Quinton, Iowa via Fulton, IL.....

* * *

SPECIAL PENN CENTRAL trains to the Army-Navy football game ran Nov. 30. Here are their consists: (order is front to rear on return trip; the reverse on the runs to the game) TRAIN N-1 (reserved train to & from Newark & NY) GG-1 #914; PC coaches 1539, 1509, 1535, 1538, 1543, 1574, 1502 (all ex-PRR 64-seat); Amtrak parlor lounge 3353; PC coach 1589 (ex-PRR 60-seat wearing a blue stripe, was the "first" Amtrak coach--actually leased--displayed May 1, 1971); PC coach 1488 (ex-PRR 72-seat); PC 64-seat ex-PRR coaches 1512, 1523, 1578, 1519. TRAIN N-2 (similar to N-1) GG-1 # 925; private car "Pennsylvania"; Amtrak coach 7003; PC coach-snack bar 3233; Amtrak snack bar coach 3969; Amtrak coaches 5476, 5612, 5440; PC coach 1480 & 1588; private car "Hampton Roads." TRAIN W-1 (reserved to & from D.C.) GG-1's 4894 & 4932; PC coach 1569; PC parlor-obs 7128 "George Washington"; Amtrak parlor-bag 1703 "Windham County"; PC coach 1537, 1482, 1411, 1403, 1481, 1520; PC parlor-bag 7187 "Queens County"; PC coaches 1408, 1418, 1429, 1515, Amtrak coach 5662; PC coach 1485. Train N-3 (unres. to & from Metro Park, Newark)GG-1 #901; PC coaches 2116, 2136, 2106, 2130 (ex-NYC 108-seat); PC 6-day room/buffet lounge 4423; PC (ex-NYC) 108-seat coaches 2112, 2150, 2100, 2110. TRAIN W-2 (res. to & from D.C.) GG-1's 4893, 908; PC coaches 1535, 1540, 1524, 1583; PC parlor-obs 7127 "Martha Washington"; PC

 (continued on page 15)

NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION
ROUTE-BY-ROUTE SUMMARY
ON-TIME PERFORMANCE
(ICC METHOD)
October 1974

Routes	Trains Operated Oct. '74	Per Cent On-Time Oct. 1974	Per Cent On-Time Sept. 1974
SHORT HAUL			
Albany/Montreal	62	95.2	88.3
Chicago/Carbondale	62	67.7	43.3
Chicago/Dubuque	62	91.9	95.0
Chicago/Detroit	124	88.7	90.0
Chicago/Milwaukee	310	93.5	90.0
Chicago/St. Louis	84	72.6	76.0
Chicago/Quincy	62	43.5	73.3
Los Angeles/San Diego	186	93.0	95.6
New York/Boston Inland Route	479	80.0	76.9
Shore Route	109	87.2	91.0
New York/Buffalo	318	81.8	85.3
New York/Washington Conventional	637	92.0	91.6
Philadelphia/Harrisburg	594	80.8	84.2
Oakland/Bakersfield	62	100.0	88.3
Washington/Boston	573	93.9	91.3
Washington/Cumberland	70	71.4	76.1
Seattle/Portland	186	96.8	91.1
Chicago/Champaign	62	40.3	48.3
Washington/Harrisburg	89	53.9	53.5
Port Huron/Chicago	62	98.4	93.8
TOTAL SHORT HAUL	4193	85.5	85.3
METROLINERS	882	85.4	85.6
TURBOTRAINS			
New York/Boston	210	64.8	74.0
TURBOLINERS			
Chicago/St. Louis	94	71.3	76.0
LONG DISTANCE ROUTES			
Boston/Harrisburg	8	100.0	77.8
Chicago/Florida	93	80.6	61.1
Chicago/Los Angeles	62	95.2	83.3
Chicago/Houston	62	91.9	95.0
Charlottesville/Newport News	62	72.6	83.3
Chicago/New Orleans	62	40.3	58.3
Chicago/Oakland	62	90.3	90.0
Chicago/Seattle	88	97.7	99.0
Chicago/Cincinnati/Washington	62	75.8	83.3
New Orleans/Los Angeles	26	76.9	50.0
New York/Chicago	62	12.9	13.3
New York/Florida	217	96.8	95.7
New York/Harrisburg	46	82.6	83.3
New York/Kansas City	62	0	1.7
St. Louis/Laredo	26	73.1	26.9
Washington/Montreal	62	90.3	83.3
Seattle/Los Angeles	62	74.2	86.7
Chicago/Minneapolis	36	94.4	88.9
New York/Detroit	2	50.0	0
TOTAL LONG DISTANCE	1162	76.6	75.0
TOTAL AMTRAK	6447	83.2	83.1

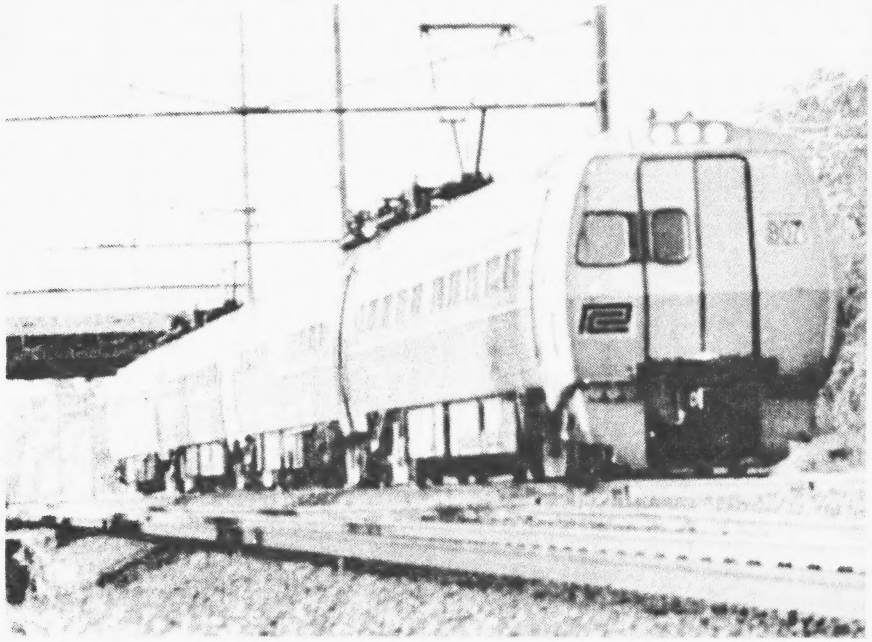
THANKSGIVING ON AMTRAK 1974

by Ken Maylath

No two ways about it--Thanksgiving Sunday this year wasn't the best time to travel in the heavily populated Eastern and Midwestern sections of the country--no matter what the means of transportation. But many had to travel that day--traditionally one of the heaviest single travel days of the year--as they returned to home, school and jobs at the conclusion of the long weekend.

Weather was the culprit which made the return journeys of thousands a difficult proposition to say the least. From Eastern Michigan to Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia it was snow--two feet in places. In the Middle Atlantic area it was drenching rain and high wind.

Winds reaching gale force virtually closed Washington's National Airport for much of the day and caused diversion of a TWA flight to Dulles--a flight which went down in the hills West of Dulles with the loss of 92 lives. Highways thru several states were littered with abandoned cars, as thousands of motorists didn't make it home until the next day. The Pennsylvania Turnpike was shut down completely for most



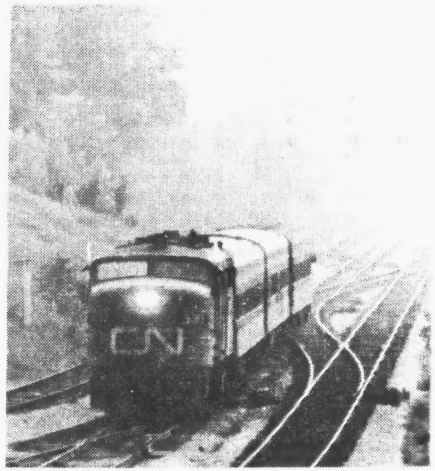
No Metroliner was more than 15 minutes late. Metroliner photo by the author.

of its Harrisburg-Pittsburgh distance from Sunday into Monday. The Ohio Turnpike was a similar story. Such conditions don't do much for bus service as well as private auto travel. Indeed, many buses arrived in Baltimore more than an hour late from New York--an area plagued by wind and rain, but no snow. Many waited for hours in bus terminals before getting on their way.

Before all of this developed, Amtrak was prepared for a bigger Thanksgiving than in 1973. 1050 extra car trips were planned for the entire weekend, compared with about 800 last year (including about 140 both times for 5 special Army-Navy

(continued on page 13)

Rail Canada



CN "overflow" relief train following the Turbo out of Toronto, at Danforth station, last July 14. Consist is 3 cars: 2 coaches and 2500-series snack lounge. Train runs Friday & Sunday just behind Turbo's 4:30 departure as an extra, varies in length from 3 to 13 cars. Photo by Fred Matthews.

CP RAIL'S POSITION on Pacific Northwest ferry fares continues enigmatic. The one-way fare from Vancouver to Nanaimo has been cut from $2.95 to $2 for the 38-mile crossing. This contrasts sharply to policy on the Seattle-Victoria service in the summer, when fares, increased well over 1973 levels on May 1, were raised again July 1. In other news, attempts are being made to obtain federal subsidies to support continued operation of the Seattle-Victoria "Princess Marguerite." Lloyd Davies, head of the Victoria Downtown Business Assoc., reported late in November that his group had contacted elected representatives in Ottawa. Davies was optimistic. "It appears that we in B.C. have a good case to get federal money but at this stage it's too early to tell what the outcome will be."

ONTARIO'S TRANSPORTATION CAULDRON continues to bubble following the government's withdrawal from mag-lev GO-Urban system testing. A no-confidence motion by opposition Liberal leader Robert Nixon and NDP leader Stephen Lewis was defeated in parliament 56-35. The fiery Lewis, always good at turning a phrase, described the Government's experimentation with GO-Urban as a "kind of strange, beleagured obsession with technological grandeur." Heinz Ruhnau, secretary of state for the West German Ministry of Transport, and Dr. Dietmarg Frenzel of the Bonn ministry of research and technology, agreed that the mag-lev system could not provide an economical solution to urban transit problems. In an analytical statement, Frenzel said: "It's just too expensive at this time."

The fiery Lewis, unfazed by the defeat of his no-confidence motion, told the press: "It (GO-Urban) began as a piece of political opportunism. But it ended up with a sort of self-hypnotism on the part of the people who were involved. They forgot about its value in applying it to people and transportation systems."

TORONTO'S SUBWAY SYSTEM, long praised for cleanliness and freedom from vandalism and violence, has been experiencing in recent months crime problems long associated with American systems. TTC officials have refused to release information on crime, and while criticizing Canada's liberal immigration policies, have stepped up anti-crime measures, including increased police patrols, computer terminals at subway stations to help speed fingerprint checks, additional closed-circuit TV cameras, private security patrols, and electronic warning systems for buses in trouble. The system recently reported a bus hijacking.

CANADIAN NEWS BRIEFS: Major changes in service, fares, and transfers have increased daily patronage of the surviving Toronto Dial-A-Bus project almost 40%..... Ontario Transport Minister John Rhodes said the government may allow construction of bus-only lanes on the portion of the Spadina Expressway now completed except for pavement..... Canada announced in late Nov. an 18% cutback in oil exports to the U.S.; it now supplies almost 1/3 of crude oil that the U.S. imports. These cutbacks will be further increased over the next 9 years. Canada also has imposed a tax which raised the cost of exported oil to that of oil obtained elsewhere..... B.C. Ferries this fall is operating its Vancouver-Victoria & Vancouver-Nanaimo runs on full summer shcedules.....

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Readers may be interested in some data concerning a recent trip on two relatively obscure CN trains: weekly train 177 from Quebec to Chicoutimi, and train 72 from Chicoutimi to Montreal. I recently took a weekend trip with the express purpose of sampling these two trains.

After an overnight trip from Kitchener via trains 664-58-20, I boarded train 177 on a gray Saturday in November at Quebec's Palais Station. Consist was one heavyweight coach, one baggage car, and one (empty) mail storage car. Passenger load was 7. This train runs tri-weekly during the summer, but only weekly in winter. Its 7½ schedule to do the 227 miles to Chicuotimi hardly competes with the highway, but it serves many points not accessible by road and is used in the summer by campers and hikers.

Departure required pulling out into the yards and then backing through the station on track 10 to the Limoilou junction in front of the station. The first 56 miles to Riviere-a-Pierre, over the St. Raymond Subdivision, revealed the worst track of the trip; speeds of around 30 mph were normal; 35 mph was the highest. At Riviere-a-Pierre the crew invited us to visit the "Marchand General" across the street "pour manger"; it would be the only chance we had to obtain any food.

At Riviere-a-Pierre the main line from Montreal is joined and the track improved somewhat, with 50 mph speeds occasionally possible. As we reached the summit of the Laurentian Mountains the snow became quite deep (there was none at Quebec), and our passenger load swelled to its peak of 10. Darkness fell well before 4pm as we descended to the Saguenay valley. We had become about 30 minutes late in meeting a freight north of Riviere-a-Pierre (the only other train seen the entire day), and our final arrival at Chicoutimi was about 15 minutes late, after the spectacular descent down steep track to the Saguenay River. Only two other passengers joined me for the entire trip to Chicoutimi.

At Chicoutimi I purchased a lower berth for the return to Montreal, and after a Chinese dinner at a restaurant near the station, boarded train 72 which left on time at 9:20pm. Consist was baggage car, two heavyweight coaches, sleeper lounge "Ft. Melville" (4 DBR); and sleeper "Melville" (8 SecDBR1CptDR). I was the only sleeper passenger out of Chicoutimi. It was my first trip in a lower berth since the Owl from Boston in 1968.

At Jonquiere, 10 miles from Chicoutimi, we added an express car and two mail storage cars, and, with some coupling difficulties, departed 25 minutes late. At Chambord passengers were transferred from the Dolbeau connection (the through Dolbeau-Montreal sleeper was discontinued a few years back) which consisted of a single coach and single baggage/mail car.

I soon fell asleep, finding that the "Melville" was a perfectly-maintained car especially in that area where Amtrak has so much difficulty, the quality of its ride. I slept soundly until wakened at Hervey, where there is intricate switching with train 74, the Cochrane-Quebec service. Here we picked up an express car, baggage car, mail car, two coaches, diner-lounge, and sleeper "Watrous" also of the 8-1-1-1 type. Our train was now 15 cars long, with 7 cars of head end, possibly the longest unnamed train in North America.

Although we departed Hervey half an hour late, we were on time again within the hour. The schedule is quite easy; in fact, the engineer would hold back at stops, departing a few minutes late, in order to run at 60 instead of 40 to the next stop.

When I dressed I found that my shoes had been polished (Amtrak are you listening?). The diner-lounge served a good if quite expensive (nearly $4 including tip) breakfast; writing down the order in French was a new experience. It should be remembered that CN has now discontinued entirely the policy of prepaying meals for sleeping-car passengers.

After passing through the Mt. Royal tunnel (the only long-haul train to do so) arrival in Montreal was 1 minute early.

I returned to Kitchener by taking the Super Continental to Ottawa and the The Exec. to Toronto. Dining car service on the Super was excellent, as well as the club car service on The Exec.

I should say in closing that I have found CN services to be of the highest quality in recent months. Equipment is well-maintained, food is excellent, service is generally superb, with many of the little touches, such as polishing shoes, that Amtrak no longer seems to care about. The staff in the Kitchener office is always helpful, and can procure reservations anywhere on CN within moments through their computer terminal. Trains are almost always on time; the only

train I rode on saw on this weekend that was more than a few minutes late was my connection, No. 664, from Kitchener to Toronto, which left Kitchener in a raging blizzard 30 minutes late. Connections are always held, though, and efforts are made to expedite transfers by placing connections on adjoining tracks. Our biggest complaint in the Kitchener-Waterloo area is not enough trains: Kitchener has the third greatest revenue in southwest Ontario (after London and Windsor, but only has 7 daily trains compared to London's 24 and Windsor's 10. I suppose, as always, it's not as good as it used to be, but it is generally the highest level of service available in North America today, and reminds me of my youth 15 years ago on the Santa Fe in Oklahoma.

Duane W. Roller

CONSISTS OF CN TRAINS RIDDEN AND NOTED ON TRIP
(A weekend in mid-November 1974)

#664: London-Toronto
RDC
RDC/snack bar
RDC
RDC/baggage

#58 CAVALIER
Baggage-Toronto-Montreal
Baggage: Toronto-Ottawa
Sleeper: Toronto-Ottawa (4-8-4)
Coach:
Coach: Toronto-Montreal
Coach:
Lounge:
Coach:
Daynighter coach:
Sleeper: (10-6)
Sleeper: (14-4)

Montreal sleepers were full.

#20: Montreal-Quebec
Coach
Lounge
Coach
Club

4 club and 69 coach
passengers (Sat. am)

No. 177: Quebec-Chicoutimi
Coach
Baggage
Mail storage

7 passengers out of Quebec,
3 into Chicotumi; maximum 10.

No. 74: Cochrane-Quebec
Mail storage
Baggage
Coach
Coach
Lounge
Sleeper (8-1-1-1)

(consists into Quebec)

No. 72: Chicoutimi-Montreal
Express: Jonquiere-Montreal
Express: Cochrane-Montreal
Mail storage:
Mail storage:
Mail storage: Jonquiere-Montreal
Mail storage
Baggage: Chicoutimi-Montreal

(continued above)

(#72 concluded)
Coach: Chicoutimi-Montreal
Coach:
Lounge sleeper "Ft. Melville"4BR
Sleeper "Melville" 8-1-1-1
Coach: Cochrane-Montreal
Coach:
Diner-lounge:
Sleeper "Watrous" 4-1-1-1

42 passengers into Montreal
(34 coach and 7 sleeper, all
sleeper passengers in lowers)

#27: Washington-Montreal
Baggage/dorm
Sleeper (unnamed) 10-6
Sleeper "Dillon County" 10-6
Sleeper "Beaufort County" 10-6
Diner
Lounge
4 coaches

#1: Montral-Vancouver
Baggage
2 coaches
daynighter coach
cafe-lounge
sleeper "Eastport" 4-8-4
diner-Capreol

93 passengers out of Montreal
(42 local coach, 35 long-haul
coabhes, 16 sleeper).

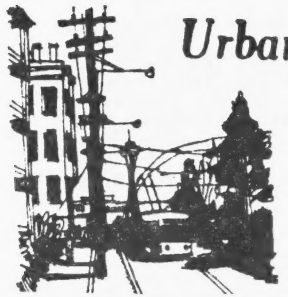
CP 1: Montreal-Vancouver
Baggage/dorm
Coach
Skyline dome
Diner
Sleeper 5-1-4-4
Dome obs. sleeper 3-1

#45 Ottawa-Toronto
Baggage
Club
2 coach
lounge
2 coach

#167 Toronto-Stratford
3 coaches

CP 12 Sudbury-Toronto
Baggage
Coach
Skyline dome
Sleeper 5-1-44
Diner (Sudbury)

Urban-Suburban Transit



FIRST JURY VERDICT arising from the tragic ICG commuter train collision in Chicago on Oct. 30, 1972, resulted in a decision to award 3 individuals $1,421,500 in damages, over $1 million of which was in punitive damages. ICG said it will appeal the Nov. 21 decision, called the "largest punitive damage award ever in any case in Illinois."

THE BART LAWSUIT, reported here earlier, being brought against the manufacturers of the problem-plagued BART equipment, is said to be the most complex such lawsuit ever filed, and unprecedented in the transit industry. The 187-page suit, filed in Alameda County (CA) Superior Court, details hundreds of alleged defects ranging sagging doors due to mechanical distortion in the cars to improperly designed and incorrectly manufactured electric drive motors. The suit asks $237.8 million in damages and will probably come to trial in about two years.

OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT, Peter Roehm of Rockport, MA (near Boston), spearheaded an effort last month to prevent the town fathers from dropping out of the B&M-MBTA commuter line because the town was starting to be billed for part of the costs of the train service. Pete hammered away in the press about the virtues of commuter trains (quote: "In this present world climate of energy shortages, both real and potential, with more demands coming to lessen automobile usage, the comments of the Rockport selectmen (city councilmen) are clearly out of order if not out of mind"), and when the town voted on the issue on Nov. 26, the trains won by a margin of 7½ to 1. Some other towns--Andover, Ballardvale, North Andover and Shawsheen--were dropped from the commuter service, and some of them found quickly that they wanted back in.

IN OTHER NEWS from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, the DOT has given a $23.4 million grant to extend the South Shore Red Line from Quincy Center to South Braintree. The MBTA must put up $5.76 million in matching funds.

TRANSIT NEWS BRIEFS: A Gallup poll last month found that 73% of Americans favor retaining the 55-mph speed limit, many because of the improvement in traffic fatalities; and 68% think trucks should have the same or a slower speed. In mid-December the House Public Works Committee voted to make the limit permanent and pressure the states to enforce it..... The Milwaukee Road, effective Dec. 2, was to add 8 more rush-hour trains to its two lines out of Chicago..... Seattle's Metro Transit Committee will study the possibility of adding new commuter ferries on Puget Sound and Lake Washington..... A recent magazine of interest is Mass Transit, which began publication in July. The slick-paper, color magazine costs $12 a year (12 issues) from538 National Press Bldg., Washington DC 20045..... Greyhound bus fares for intra-state travel in California are expected to rise 7.8% on Dec. 16..... An expenditure of $1.7 million has been okayed by the Houston-Galveston (TX) Area Council to form an area mass transit plan, it was announced late last month..... Richard Clark is the new president of the Board of Directors of BART..... A plan to raise the gasoline tax by 2¢ a gallon to help finance new fixed-rail mass transit systems has been proposed in California this month..... Los Angeles is taking steps toward limited condemnation of SP lines there for use by commuter trains; it is asking the ICC and Public Utilities Commission for approval of the plan..... Southern Pacific, on the other hand, is opposed to the idea, and sent executives to the Southland to convince the press that no one would ride commuter trains there because "People here are too married to their cars"..... Seattle's 2-week transit strike which ended Nov. 23 apparently didn't hurt patronage; ridership was believed to be above average a few days after buses began rolling again..... The Illinois Dept. of Transportation has commissioned a Maryland manufacturer to design plans for a double-decker bus for Chicago street use.....

(continued from page 8)

game trains on Saturday--2 from Washington and 3 from New York). For Sunday, 299 extra cars were programmed for the Northeast Corridor. I headed to Washington Union Station that afternoon to watch operations and compare with last year. This before fully realizing how the weather was conspiring to throw even more of the burden Amtrak's way.

An indication as to how things were developing could be seen before I left Baltimore, shortly after 1:00. The PA system announced that the northbound SENATOR, due at 1:45, might be standing room only. I boarded the EAST WIND, normally a run from Boston, but on Sundays only originating in New York. The 10-car consist eased in about 10 minutes late and arrived in Washington 8 minutes behind without incident. Nearly 600 detrained, even though it was still fairly early (the train had left New York at 10 am).

The northbound SILVER STAR had just arrived, close to schedule, as the EAST WIND came to a stop on track 20. Southbound it was a few minutes behind us and a few minutes down. It departed close to time in both directions with 75 or so boarding for the trip toward Florida.

Metroliner operations can be handled rather quickly here. The hourly runs were sold out for the rest of the day. Timewise they did rather well, with the majority coming in on schedule and none more than 15 minutes behind.

It was nearly an hour before departure, but a large crowd was already gathering for the 3:05 MURRAY HILL to New York. The effect of weather on other transportation seemed to be showing. Last year I counted just over 500 boarding. This time when the gate admitted the last few stragglers the total topped 1000. That's just about the capacity of a full length train of high capacity coaches.

At this point the BROADWAY, which had to fight thru the snows of Western Pennsylvania and Ohio, made its 5-hour late appearance. It, at least, did get through. The snows also took their toll on the JAMES WITCOMB RILEY, which showed about an hour later--nearly 3:30 behind.

In the non-Amtrak category, Southern #8, the mixed train from Lynchburg, made it in on time, at 2:30. Sixty detrained--good indeed for this run.

Another big group lining up now for the MERCHANTS LIMITED at 4:05. Last year the loading was in the vicinity of 500. This time, 850-900. The BROADWAY was ready on time for its westbound departure in spite of the extremely late arrival. The 1973 passenger count of 40 was nearly doubled this time--about 75. Yet another large crowd now, this time for the MONTREALER, at 5:05. 750-800 poured thru the gate, compared with a little over 500 last year.

Due in at 5:00 was the MINUTE MAN from Boston. Ironically, its lateness this year was exactly the same as a year ago--65 minutes. The JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY was held for transfering passengers who couldn't be counted since they simply crossed the platform. Last year they were counted. Even so, the 800 who detrained from the 1973 MINUTE MAN were far outnumbered by the 1100 plus who poured off this time. The JWR accepted 125-150 (without transfers), slightly higher than 1 year ago.

I decided on a return to Baltimore via the NEW YORKER at 7:05. This one had 2 sections, 1 posted for 7:02 just ahead of the regular section at 7:05. Each had 11 cars. Washington passengers were directed, via the PA, to the regular section, more than 500 strong. At least a couple of hundred found the special section, including myself. This turned out to be basically the same equipment which formed the EAST WIND a few hours earlier. We DID leave at 7:02 and we DIDN'T stop at Capital Beltway as scheduled. Since the stop was to receive passengers only, we were able to leave it for the regular section and move straight on to Baltimore with some extra minutes to board the big group waiting on the windswept platform there. Departure came on time at 7:49. The regular section showed 15 late and picked up a few leftover passengers. Both trains had some seats left for Wilmington and Philadelphia passengers.

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So, it was a significantly bigger Thanksgiving windup this year for Amtrak, thanks in part to the weatherman. One that will probably be hard to top next year unless bad traveling conditions and/or another fuel crunch should develop. And in this area, at least, most rail passengers seemed to get there with less trouble and delay than on other means of public transportation. Many had to stand in the extra crush, to be sure, but most would probably opt for that, rather than sitting or standing in some terminal for hours waiting for departure--or even being stranded overnight along some remote stretch of highway.

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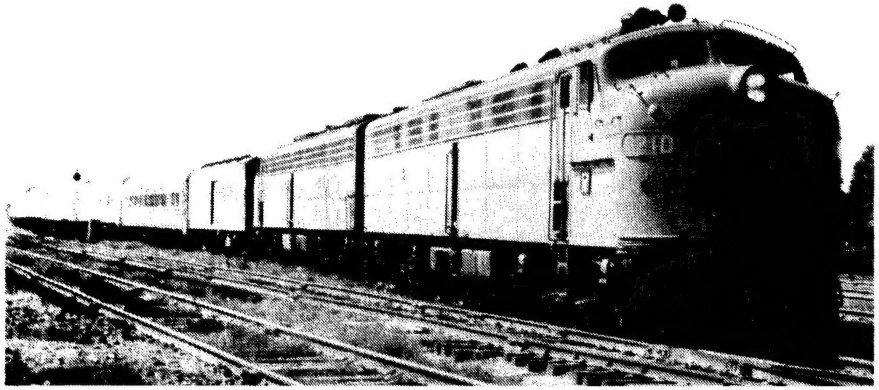

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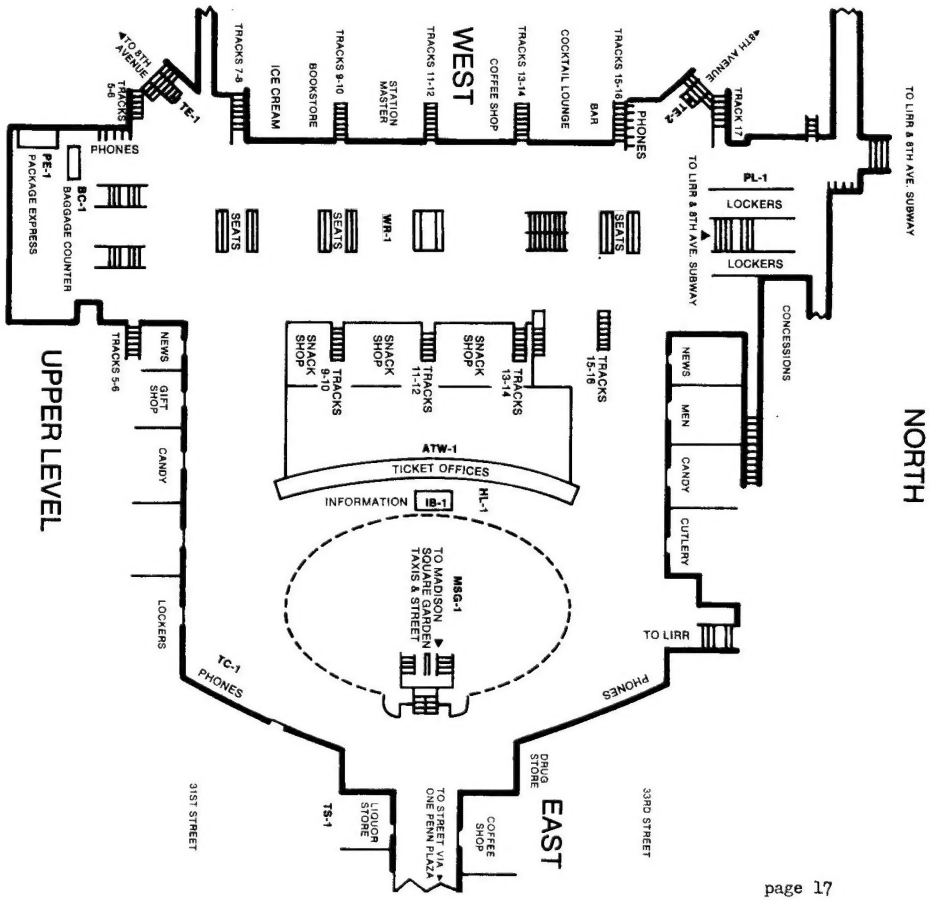

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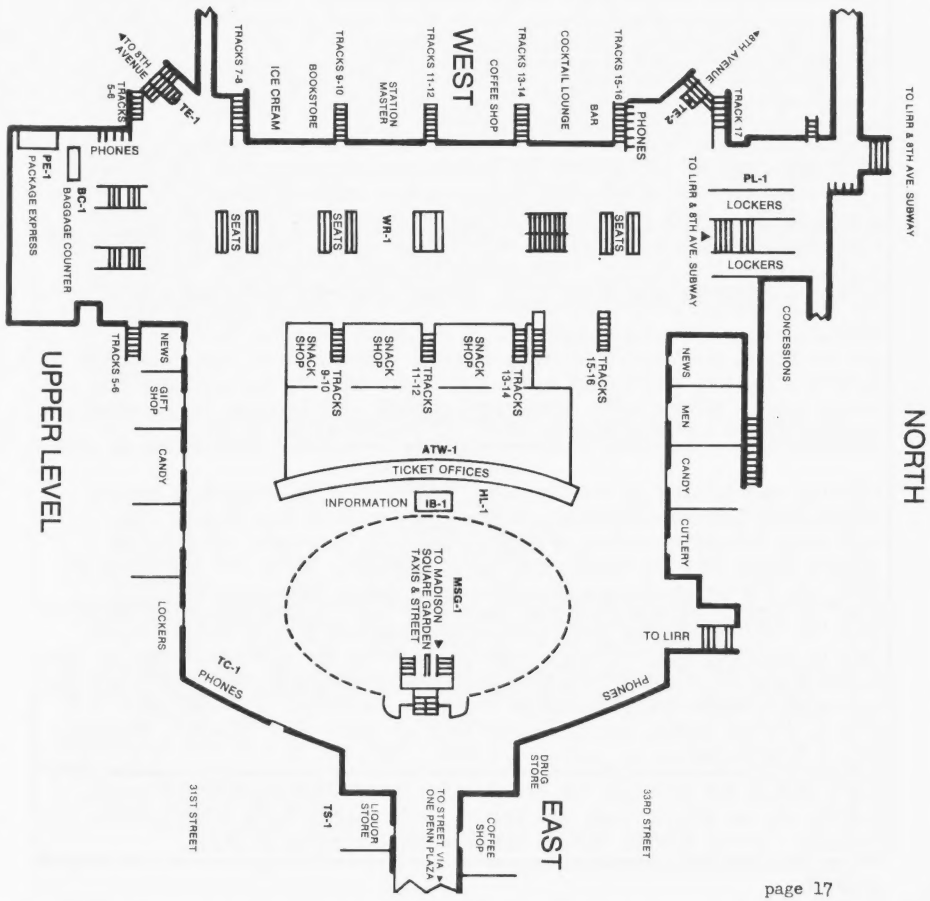

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RAILROAD UNIFORM BUTTONS 50¢ each. Seaboard, Frisco and Georgia. The following 60¢ each: Big Four, Western Maryland and Southwest Missouri. The following 75¢ each: Pullman, Baltimore and Ohio, Canadian National, Seaboard Coast Line and National Rys. of Mexico. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

FOR CHRISTMAS - A 28 page storybook to color. "STEAMY" is a locomotive on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. His adventures on the old D&RGW narrow gauge will give youngsters a feel for Rocky Mountain railroading as it was. $1.75. Dave Ulmer, Jr., 1407 Holmes Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

OUR COMBING of the nation for public timetables has worked. Collections are coming to us from everywhere. We can handle even more. Top prices. We are the upper crust of timetable dealers. Try us first for $'s sake. Antique Timecard Acquisitors, 21 E. Robin Road, Holland, PA 18966.

JUST PRINTED - "Railroad Potpourri," 80 pages, soft cover, 6 x 9, 73 pictures covering a railfan's 40 years of railroad photography. $4.00 postpaid. Homer R. Hill, 19 Quimby Lane, Bernardsville, NJ 07924.

"NORTHWEST SUBURBAN MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT" illus. description of Chicago commuter line. 14 pages total (incl. 8-8x10 pix), spiral bound. $2.60 ppd. Ky. res. add 13¢ sales tax. B. L. Wright, 1400 Valley Drive, Louisville, KY 40213.

TIMETABLES - Buying all public TTs. Amtrak and earlier. Send your list. Collections too. C. F. Loucks. 199 Wayland St., Hamden, CT 06518.

SUN VALLEY SPECIAL all-pullman excursion train will operate from Los Angeles to Shoshone, Idaho and return, going via SP and Donner Pass and returning via UP and Las Vegas, Washington's Birthday Weekend, February 14-18, 1975. Schedule permits a daylight crossing of Donner Pass and a daylight run from Salt Lake City to Las Vegas. All-inclusive fares start at $240. For brochure and reservations, contact Pacific Railroad Society, Box 2274, Mission Viejo, CA 92675.

THE BLOCK LINE

Official news bulletin of Tri-State Chapter, National Ry. Historical Society. Contemporary Eastern railroading featured each month in big, 16-page issue! Rail news, freight schedules, track diagrams, railfan events, etc. Issued monthly except July and August, only $3.50 per year. WRITE: Tri-State Chapter, NRHS, c/o 210 Perrine Avenue, Piscataway, New Jersey 08854.

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miles and provide a one-class service?

In practically every country in the free world a journey of this length would have both first and second class. What exactly are Amtrak's plans on first class (parlor cars) daytime service? With the exception of New York-Washington service, and the 5 trains each way between New York and Boston that carry parlor cars, there is not much else--a few trains in the Midwest and on the West Coast, and certain daytime runs where there might be a sleeper attached operating as a day parlor.

The ADIRONDACK has no first class service, the Empire Service has none, now Detroit has none, the French Turbo trains have none. (Yet the same type of Turbo trains operating on the SNCF has a two-class service, as do the Canadian National Turbos.)

...Possibly Amtrak believes passengers who desire daytime first class travel should fly. It would certainly be worth an article to describe Amtrak's intentions.

Walter M. Kaufman

New York, New York

Being a former resident of the state of Michigan, I was much interested in your articles on the restoring of passenger train service of the former Michigan Central from Detroit to Buffalo and also the route from Battle Creek to Port Huron, Michigan of the Grand Trunk Western, altho I wish they had used GTW tracks all the way.

My home town of Lansing, Michigan was on this main line route of GTW--Chicago to Montreal, using its own tunnel (built in 1890) under the St. Clair River, from Port Huron to Sarnia, Ontario. For years Grand Trunk operated two fine thru passenger trains between these cities (851 miles), the MAPLE LEAF and the INTERNATIONAL LIMITED on its double-track right of way, all the distance. Lansing was a great town for us kids to watch trains as four railroads served this town. Besides GTW was the Grand Rapids-Detroit line of Pere Marquette, a branch line of MCRR from Saginaw-Bay City to Jackson, where it connected with Michigan Central's fine main line, Chicago-Detroit-Buffalo, all double track, heavy rails, crushed rock roadbed and "water-on-the-fly" from track pans between the rails. There was also a branch line of Lake Shore & Michigan Southern that came up to Lansing from its famous main line, from Chicago to Buffalo, via Cleveland. Both LS&MS and MCRR operated thru trains from Chicago to New York and Boston, the New York Central taking over at Buffalo. Both of these roads had a name for fine, fast trains and service, long before Vanderbilt and NYC gobbled them up into his system.

Raymond F. Nichols

Los Osos, California

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